

LOCAL NEWS

MIRAMAR

Progress visible on 54-acre site of Town Center

■ Miramar's live-work-play vision is slowly taking shape with the construction of the first roads and future civic, commercial, office and residential buildings.

BY EILEEN SOLER
Special to The Miami Herald

A concrete monolith large enough to dwarf Miramar's big new City Hall will not be an eyesore for long.

It will be beautiful, city officials said.

The 4½-level, 963-space parking garage and transportation hub is set to be surrounded by Mediterranean-style shops with arched breezeways on the first floor and trendy terraced condominiums on the top three.

It's part of the city's vision for the Town Center that is becoming a reality with every turn of dirt on the 54-acre heart-shaped parcel.

"We'll have all the ingredients for living, breathing urban activity 24/7 — civic, commercial, office and residential," said Wazir Ishmael, Miramar's assistant city manager.

Earlier this month, in fact, city leaders hosted a ceremony

marking the groundbreaking for the \$16 million Miramar Branch Library and Education Complex, which is already under construction.

The 72,000-square-foot building will house a full-service library on the ground floor. The space on the second and third floors will be used by Broward Community College and Nova Southeastern University.

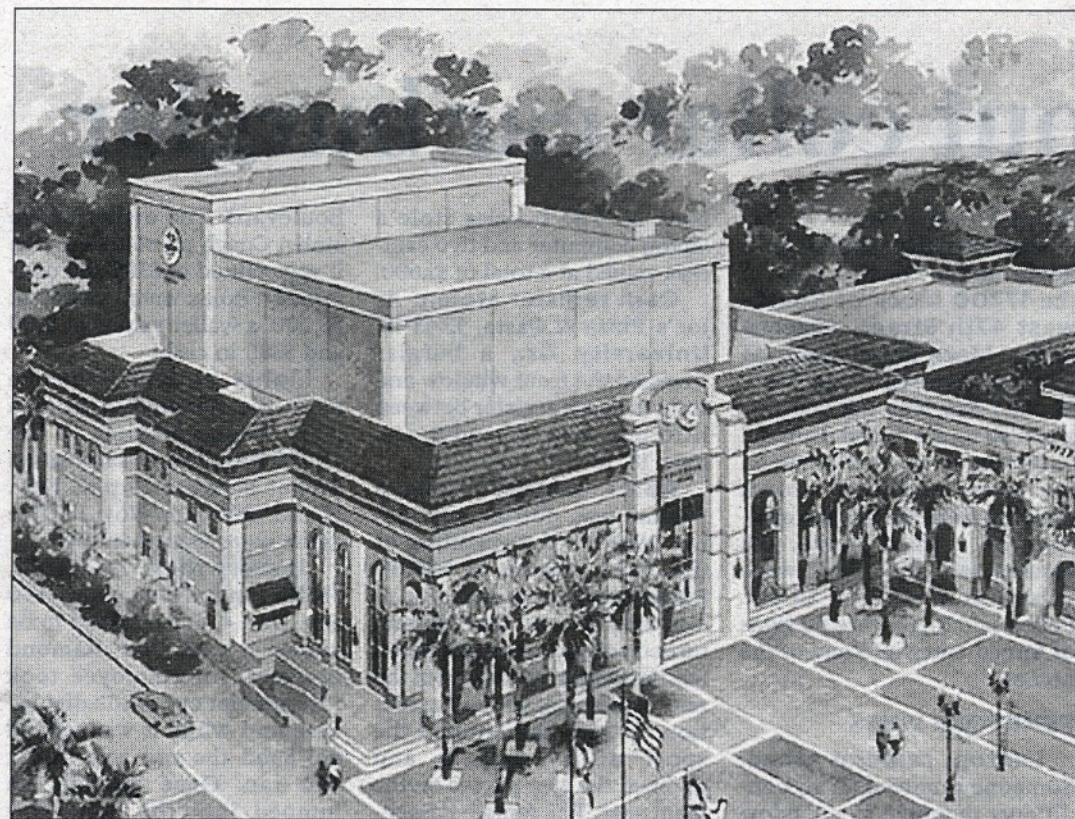
The transportation hub will be a link to three Broward bus routes, Miramar shuttles and a Miami-Dade County connection to Metro Rail.

"Everything adds to the vitality of the city," said Hector Vazquez, the city's strategic development officer.

A construction cost estimate for the art and culture center, which will be built next door to City Hall, will be submitted to the City Commission in January. The combined cost of the arts center, library and City Hall is about \$60 million.

Ishmael said infrastructure for another 565 parking spaces, surrounded by townhomes, condos, retail stores and a 24-

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PERFORMANCES AND MORE: Miramar's future Town Center eventually will include an art and culture center next to City Hall. The plan contemplates a theater, art gallery, multipurpose rooms, recital/rehearsal spaces and classrooms, among other features.

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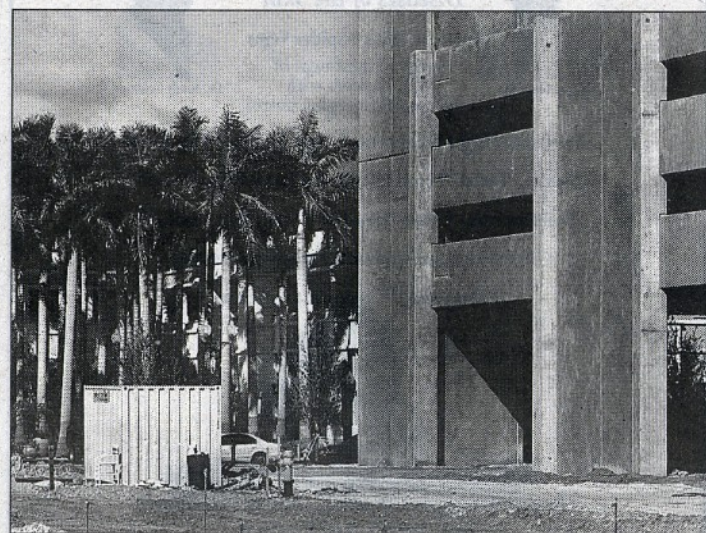
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The Miami Herald



EILEEN SOLER / FOR THE MIAMI HERALD

CAMOUFLAGE COMING: A parking garage that now dwarfs Miramar's new City Hall at Town Center will be hidden by a four-story building that will wrap around it.

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hour fitness center is under way.

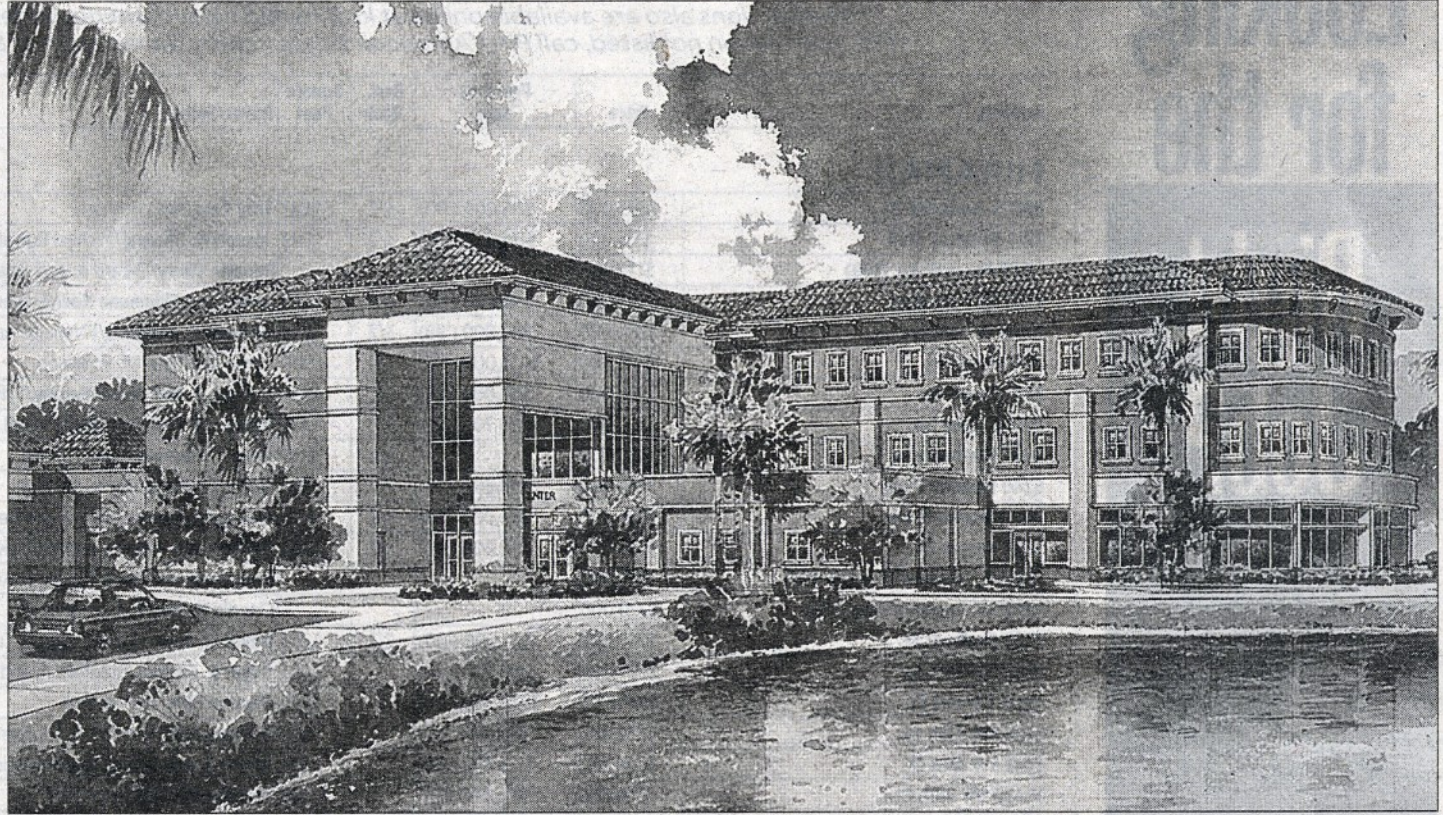
Just west of that structure and across the street from the proposed art center will be a large park square surrounded on all four sides by two-story "live/work" units.

"We're hoping to attract artists who will run studios or shops on the ground floor and live upstairs," Ishmael said.

Three main streets, Canal Street, Main Street and City Hall Promenade, also are under construction.

Vazquez said the entire Town Center project is expected to cost the city \$320 million and be completed by 2010.

Meanwhile, a concentrated community of townhomes and condominiums called Miramar Town Center Residences, with a swimming pool and bridges that connect to the municipal and shopping area, also is planned. The homes and condos, priced from \$239,000 to \$402,000, are already for sale.



CONSTRUCTION UNDER WAY: This month, Miramar city leaders hosted a ceremonial groundbreaking for the \$16 million Miramar Branch Library and Education Complex, pictured in an artist's rendering. It will house a library on the ground floor, Broward Community College on the second floor and Nova Southeastern University on the third.